United Nations A/60/75*

General Assembly

Distr.: General
30 June 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Item 57 (b) of the preliminary list**
Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 29 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which hosted the High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Subregional Organizations in the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action from 29 to 31 March 2005, I have the honour to transmit the report of the High-level Meeting (annex I) and the joint communiqué adopted on 31 March 2005 (annex II).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annexes could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 57 (b) of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Yerzhan Kh. **Kazykhanov**

* Reissued for technical reasons.
** A/60/50 and Corr.1.

05-35098* (E) 110705

Annex I to the letter dated 29 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report of the High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Subregional Organizations in the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action

Almaty, 29-31 March 2005

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to United Nations General Assembly resolution 57/242 of 20 December 2002, the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Developing Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan in August 2003.

2. The Conference unanimously adopted the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, and the Almaty Ministerial Declaration. Subsequently, the General Assembly endorsed the Almaty Programme of Action and the Almaty Ministerial Declaration at its 58th session in its resolution A/58/Res/201.

3. The General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 59/245 adopted at its 59th session emphasized the role of the international organizations for the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. In the same resolution, the General Assembly invited the organizations, including the World Bank, World Customs Organization, World Trade Organization, UNCTAD and the United Nations Regional Commissions to integrate the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in their relevant work programme. The General Assembly also called upon on these organizations to extend technical assistance to landlocked and transit developing countries in well coordinated manner in their efforts to establish efficient transit transport systems.

4. The Almaty Conference entrusted the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) with the mandate to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. In particular, in paragraph 51 of the Almaty Programme of Action, the Office of the High Representative was requested to, inter alia, "enhance its cooperation and coordination with organizations within the United Nations system, particularly those engaged in operational activities on the ground in landlocked and transit developing countries, to ensure effective implementation of the Programme of Action". The General Assembly also reiterated the same mandate in its resolution 59/245.

5. To further forge international partnerships for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action the UN-OHRLLS convened the High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Sub-regional Organizations in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in Almaty, Kazakhstan from 29 to 31 March 2005. The High-level Meeting was held in two parts. The first part, held on 29 and 30 March 2005, was dedicated to the "Role of International, Regional and Sub-regional Organizations in the Implementation of the

Almaty Programme of Action". The second part, held on 31 March 2005, was dedicated to an expert discussion on "Indicators to Measure Progress in Establishing Transit Systems".

6. The opening session of the meeting was attended by H.E. Mr. Kassymzhomart K. Tokaev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lao People's Democratic Republic, Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, H.E. Mr. Ruben Ramirez Lezcano, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, who Represented H.E. Ms. Cowles, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, Coordinator of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries on trade issues, H.E. Mr. Nagmanov, Minister for Transport of Kazakhstan. Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, chaired the High-Level Meeting. (see summaries in section below).

7. On the sidelines of the High-level Meeting, in close cooperation with UNDP and the Government of Kazakhstan, the High Representative launched the Report of the United Nations Millennium Project, entitled "Investing in Development: A practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals". Prof. Jeffrey Sachs, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on MDGs, participated from New York through video conference and made a substantive presentation on the impact of geographical handicaps of the landlocked developing countries on their efforts to attain MDGs.

II. Opening session

8. In his statement, **H.E. Mr. Kassymzhomart K. Tokaev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan**, mentioned that the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action, by the United Nations Ministerial Conference on Transit Transport Cooperation held in Almaty in August 2003, reflected the consensus reached by the international community on the need for specific actions to solve special problems of landlocked developing countries.

9. He noted with satisfaction that, despite a relatively short time span since the adoption by the General Assembly in December 2003 of its resolution 58/201, endorsing the outcomes of the Almaty Conference, the process of implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action had got off to a good start. He believed that the adoption of a roadmap for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, prepared by the Office of the Under-Secretary-General Mr. Anwarul Chowdhury, had become an important step in this process. In his view, the roadmap was a specific and practical document that sets up cleat targets for achieving tangible results in the process of effective and coordinated implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

10. He stressed that concerted actions by all participants in the Almaty process in order to successfully mainstream the scope of existing international agreements and initiatives in the area of transport with the provisions of the Almaty Programme of action should become another important aspect of cooperation. This involved such arrangements as the Shanghai Agreement on the Asian road network, transport corridors Europe-Caucuses-Asia (TRACECA) and North-South multilateral conventions of United Nations regional economic commissions and others.

11. As a member of major regional arrangements, Kazakhstan believed that the establishment of a unified economic, trade and customs space should be a key element of the efforts of landlocked developing countries to overcome the negative effects of their geographical location. His country continued to believe that regional cooperation, first of all South-South cooperation, and open borders, free of tariff and customs barriers, constitute a key to making these economies more competitive.

12. He drew the attention to the Central Asian region, consisting of five landlocked developing countries. Due to its unique geographical location, Central Asia could be a ground for testing recommendations of the Almaty Programme of Action related to the development of a new global framework of cooperation between landlocked developing countries, transit developing countries and their development partners. He mentioned of the proposal of Kazakhstan on the establishment of a Union of Central Asian States. He noted that such cooperation should be strengthened, including through the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and existing sub-regional initiatives, such as the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), the Silk Road project and others.

13. In his statement, **H.E. Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao People's Democratic Republic in capacity as Chairman of the Group of the Landlocked Developing Countries,** noted that significant achievements had been registered in the follow-up to the implementation of APoA. Of great importance for the implementation of APoA was the Roadmap prepared by UN-OHRLLS and adopted at the inter-agency meeting in February 2004. This was regarded by our Group as the first step in the right direction. The Group, in particular, strongly endorsed the idea to have a consolidated and coordinated technical cooperation programme to assist LLDCs. He hoped this meeting would serve as an important event to operationalize this far-reaching proposal contained in the Roadmap. He lauded UN-OHRLLS, the global focal point for the implementation of APoA, for taking the initiative and playing a leading role in this respect.

14. Another tremendous achievement for LLDCs was their effective participation in Sao Paulo UNCTAD XI in 2004, coordinated by Paraguay in close cooperation with the Lao PDR, the Chair of the Group. The final outcome of the Conference, the Sao Paulo Consensus, recognized, among other things, LLDCs as small and vulnerable economies. This had paved the way for the Group to move forward towards the ultimate recognition by WTO of LLDCs under the Work Programme on Small Economies.

15. He mentioned that since Almaty LLDCs had continued to receive increasing cooperation and assistance from donors and development partners in the development and improvement of their transit infrastructure. In this connection, the ESCAP-sponsored signing of the International Agreement on the Asian High Way Network in Shanghai, in August 2004, was welcomed. That instrument which should serve as a mirror for other regions would significantly boost regional and inter-regional economic cooperation and trade.

16. He stressed that the regional and sub-regional efforts to measure every tangible progress and benefit deriving from the implementation process were critical. However they needed to be complemented with international and national efforts. Consequently a synergy or inclusive partnership was needed to ensure the full and effective implementation of the APoA. This should apply to the implementation of all regional and sub-regional projects and deliverables to be adopted at this meeting.

17. Given the fact that sixteen landlocked developing countries are classified as least developed and the majority of them with GDP per capita income less that US$ 1000, their efforts to implement international commitments, particularly APoA and MDGs should receive increased support and assistance from the international community. In that regard, he renewed his appeal to the donor community and all development partners to contribute generously to the Trust Fund established by the UN Secretary-General to facilitate LLDCs' follow-up efforts to the implementation of APoA as called for in GA resolution A/59/245.

18. He urged the UN-OHRLLS to further mobilize and coordinate international support and undertake advocacy and monitoring for the full and effective implementation of the APoA in accordance with its mandate given by the UN General Assembly. Furthermore UN-OHRLLS was entrusted with an important mandate to

enhance its cooperation and coordination with international organizations, particularly those who undertook operational activities on the ground.

19. In his statement, **H.E. Mr. Ruben Ramirez Lezcano, Vice Minister for Economic Relations and Integration of Paraguay and Coordinator for LLDCs on trade and development matters**, provided a briefing on the actions undertaken by Paraguay in its capacity as coordinator of the landlocked developing countries on trade and development. A diversity of activities were taking place within the WTO framework. The Group supported countries in the process of accession to the WTO. Considering that 10 out of 31 landlocked developing countries were negotiating their accession to the WTO, and taking into account the exigencies and difficulties related to this process, the Paraguayan delegation in Geneva had delivered statements at each of the Working Group meetings convened in order to discuss the negotiations surrounding the accession of each landlocked developing country. It also provided technical advice to several delegations based on its experience in these matters. It was also agreed that a Special Committee would be created in order to analyze measures that could be taken to accelerate the accession negotiations and to make them as least costly as possible.

20. As far as the WTO Work Programme on Small Economies was concerned, he stated that landlocked developing countries had been recognized also as one of the groups within "small and vulnerable economies" as contained in the Sao Paulo Consensus. For that reason, the Paraguayan delegation had strongly encouraged the advancement of the work with a view to establishing the work programme. In May 2004, his delegation, jointly with the Mongolian and Bolivian delegations, had presented a specific proposal before the Committee on Trade and Development basically promoting free market access for both agricultural and non agricultural products as well as for services, in favour of small economies and the granting of technical cooperation and other facilitating mechanisms in order to achieve their better integration in the international trading system.

21. The Framework Agreement on WTO Doha round of negotiations included trade facilitation in trade negotiations, which would examine issues covered in Articles V, VIII and X of the 1994 GATT Agreement. Among these articles, it was important for LLDCs to improve Article V, because it referred to a matter of vital importance for their economies: transit transport. If its provisions were improved to contemplate LLDCs' needs and interests, landlocked developing countries would have a very valuable legal instrument that would guarantee their products expeditious transport access. In view of the benefits that their success can produce for LLDCs, the Government of Paraguay would spare no efforts to assume these obligations for the profit of all. For this reason it had offered to host the Conference of Ministers of Trade from Landlocked Developing Countries that will take place in Asuncion in August 9 and 10, with a view to discussing the progress of negotiations in the Doha Development Round and to providing our negotiators the guidelines they need to successfully conclude the preparatory work for the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference. Moreover, he stated that Paraguay, in exercising the current presidency of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), would seek to enhance sub-regional initiatives that will allow the region to advance in improving its transit transport system.

22. **H.E. Mr. Kazhmurat Nagmanov, Minister of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan, delivering a message by the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan**, stated that the Almaty Programme of Action had become an invaluable contribution to the development of transit transport systems worldwide and to the facilitation of assistance to the LLDCs in providing them with equal conditions for the participation in world trade and economic relations.

23. He expressed appreciation towards the United Nations Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, for its leading role in implementing the Almaty Programme of Action. He noted that

consolidation of efforts was indispensable since the development of transit systems was a multifaceted and complex task that could be carried out only through cooperation at all levels. He highlighted the purposeful work on minimizing negative impacts of unfavourable geographical location of the landlocked developing countries, eliminating barriers in international transport communications.

24. Much was still to be done for ensuring formation of effective transport systems, facilitating the process of accession to the basic international conventions and agreements in the field. Therefore, a joint dialogue and joint search for solutions of existing problems was very important. Only through concerted efforts the transport systems would contribute to further development of the countries and thus increase the welfare of people.

25. In his opening statement, **Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States**, commended the Government of Kazakhstan for its commitment and generosity in ensuring the continuity of the Almaty process. He mentioned that the Almaty Conference was indeed a landmark event in the search for forging a global partnership to tackle in a focused, but comprehensive manner, the marginalization of landlocked developing countries from the international trading system, stemming from their lack of territorial access to the sea and remoteness from world markets.

26. Bilateral, regional and sub-regional cooperation came to the fore as the most crucial means for the implementation of the Almaty Programme and the relevant regional and sub-regional organizations, especially those that were engaged in operational activities on the ground were important stakeholders. The General Assembly had requested the relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations to mainstream the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action into their relevant programmes of work.

27. He stressed the joint endeavour undertaken by these organizations. The Roadmap, which had been endorsed at the inter-agency meeting convened in early February 2004 in New York, identified areas that would require immediate action. These included the identification of major "missing links" in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the creation of sub-regional priority projects to develop infrastructure and facilitate trade, the establishment of national trade facilitation boards; coherent and coordinated technical assistance, resources mobilization and promotion of the accession to international conventions on transit and transport. In the Roadmap, the need for greater coordination and coherence was recognized. In the same vein, he also referred to resolution 59/245, in which the General Assembly had requested these organizations to provide well coordinated and coherent technical assistance landlocked and transit developing countries.

28. He stressed that the High-Level Meeting presented a unique opportunity for the international, regional and sub-regional organizations to undertake a serious dialogue aimed at strengthening their coordinated and coherent action to facilitate landlocked and transit developing countries in their efforts to establish efficient transit transport systems. It would also strengthen partnerships that existed between the organizations. He emphasized the substantive importance of the presentations by the experts and senior officials attending this Meeting, whose everyday job was to deal with regional and sub-regional transport infrastructure and trade facilitation. The High Representative underlined that the development of indicators was extremely important to monitor the progress in establishing efficient transit transport system. The indicators should be few in numbers and simple in application. In this respect, he stressed that the time/cost methodology developed by the UN-ESCAP could be a good starting point for their consultations.

29. He mentioned that 2005 was a decisive year for the United Nations as it prepared for the September summit to review the progress in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In that regard, he referred to the MDG project report which mentioned that the MDG-based strategies in landlocked developing

countries should focus on the recommendations included in the Roadmap for implementing the Almaty Programme of Action.

III. Efforts of international, regional and subregional organizations in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action

30. Presentations were made by the following international, regional and sub-regional organizations:

(i) World Bank: "Implementing the Almaty Programme of Actions for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries";

(ii) World Customs Organization (WCO): "The World Customs Organization and Trade Facilitation";

(iii) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): "Trade and Transit Transport Facilitation: Recent Developments in UNCTAD";

(iv) World Trade Organization (WTO): "WTO Trade Facilitation";

(v) International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO): "ICAO Technical; Cooperation Activities";

(vi) International Road Transport Union (IRU): "TIR: a Secure and Efficient Transit System";

(vii) United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP):" ESCAP's activities in support of the Almaty Programme of Action";

(viii) Asian Development Bank (ADB): "The Almaty Programme of Action: the Role of the Asian Development Bank";

(ix) United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE): "UNECE Contribution Towards the Implementation of the Almaty Plan of Action";

(x) Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA): "ECA Activities Towards the Implementation of the Almaty Plan of Action";

(xi) United Nations Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (UN-OHRLLS): "Introduction on UN-OHRLLS Proposal for Coordinated Technical Cooperation Programme";

(xii) Kazakhstan: "Kazakhstan's Activities Towards the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in Kazakhstan and Central Asia";

(xiii) UNDP: "Silk Road Programme";

(xiv) Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA): "Regional Transit Transport facilitation";

(xv) East African Community (EAC): "EAC's Activities Towards the Implementation of the Almaty Plan of Action";

(xvi) Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC): "EurAsEC's Efforts in Implementing the Almaty Plan of Action";

(xvii) Maritime Organization of West and Central Africa (MOWCA): "MOWCA's Role in the Implementation of the Almaty Plan of Action";

(xviii) Northern Corridor Transit Transport Cooperation Agreement (NCTTCA) Secretariat: "Brief on Northern Corridor Programmes and Activities";

(xix) Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR): "Strategy for Establishing Efficient Transit Transport System in the Sub-region";

(xx) Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA): "Addressing Almaty Programme of Action: Role of IGC TRACECA and EU TRACECA Programme";

(xxi) Lao PDR: "Implementation of Transit Transport Arrangements in South East Asia";

(xxii) Islamic Development Bank (IDB): "IDB Support to the Almaty Programme of Action".

IV. Indicators to measure progress in establishing efficient transit transport systems

31. The following panellists made presentations on indicators to measure the progress in establishing the efficient transit transport systems:

(i) Mr. Barry Cable, UNESCAP: "Measuring progress in establishing efficient transit transport systems";

(ii) Mr. Douglas Cruikshark, USAID: "Trade Facilitation and Investment Project";

(iii) Mr. Jean Acri, IRU: "Border crossing times, escorts and convoys for TIR operations";

(iv) Mr. Murat Bekmagambetov, Research Institute for Transport and Communication (NIITK Institute), Kazakhstan, President: on "Technical Support to the SPECA Programme in Transport";

(v) Mr. Simon Kerry, World Banks: "Progress in Regional Cooperation in Trade and Transport Facilitation for Central Asia (TTFCA)".

V. Closing session

32. The Meeting adopted a communiqué (see annex II).

33. In his closing remarks, Mr. Chowdhury noted that the Meeting had been unique in that it had brought together high-level senior officials from international, regional and sub-regional organizations to consult on strategies for the further implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. The organizations represented there were different in mandate and scope of activities but were united around the common goal to assist landlocked developing countries in their efforts to establish efficient transit transport systems.

34. He stated that his Office, as requested, would continue its consultations with the participating agencies on the proposed coordinated technical cooperation programme. He would also bring the outcome of the Meeting to the Conference of African Ministers for Transport and Infrastructure that he was to address in Addis Ababa the

following week. The issues raised in Almaty were of great relevance to the African Meeting, particularly the one relating to indicators to measure progress.

35. The Communiqué adopted by the Meeting would be sent to the UN General Assembly in order to be officially endorsed. He also announced that the report of the Meeting and the specific proposed projects and presentations would be compiled in a publication which would be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly as part of their efforts towards forging global partnerships for development and the effective implementation of the priorities of the Almaty Programme of Action.

36. He expressed, on behalf of all participants, the deepest gratitude to the host country for the wonderful hospitality and excellent arrangements provided that allowed the successful hosting and conclusion of the Meeting.

Annex II to the letter dated 29 April 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint communiqué adopted at the High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Subregional Organizations in the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action on 31 March 2005

We, the representatives of international, regional and subregional organizations, having met in Almaty from 29 to 31 March 2005, for the High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Subregional Organizations in the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, affirm the following:

1. The Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries is the internationally agreed plan for addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries through establishing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries.

2. We reiterate our commitment to supporting the full and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. In achieving this objective, we stress the importance of taking concrete steps in accordance with the road map for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, which was endorsed at the Inter-Agency Meeting convened on 4 February 2004 in New York. In this context, we note that the United Nations Millennium Development Project Report stressed that the MDG-based strategies addressing the special needs of the landlocked developing countries should be based on the recommendations contained in the road map for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

3. We recognize the importance of acting on the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/245 of 22 December 2004 to integrate the Almaty Programme of Action into the work programme of our organizations.

4. We reiterate our commitment to continuing to extend technical assistance to landlocked and transit developing countries in their efforts to establish efficient transit transport systems. In this regard, we agree to continue our work towards enhancing the coordination of our technical assistance programmes in transit transport in order to maximize the benefits derived for landlocked and transit developing countries. The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States is requested to continue the consultations on the best possible ways to help these coordination efforts, including on its proposal on a coordinated technical cooperation programme.

5. We recognize the importance of the development of transport infrastructure, especially completion of "missing links" that would facilitate movement of goods and persons along transit corridors. In this regard, we stress the importance of developing a set of criteria for financing that should take into account benefits derived from the project for poverty alleviation rather than one based solely on commercial considerations. In this regard, a code of conduct could be developed to

provide guidance to member States and development partners in their project proposal evaluation.

6. We stress the importance of establishing common indicators to monitor progress in establishing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries. In this regard, ongoing initiatives within various regional and subregional organizations as well as those of the regional commissions, including time/cost methodology developed by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, should be further developed and harmonized in order to design broadly acceptable indicators to measure progress made in establishing efficient transit transport systems and to monitor the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

7. We appreciate the initiative undertaken by the Office of the High Representative to organize this High-level Meeting. We stress the need for the continuing organization of this Meeting on an annual basis to review progress, draw lessons and share experiences of the international, regional and subregional organizations.

8. We take note with appreciation of the statements made by Mr. Somsavat Lengsavad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries and Mr. Ruben Ramirez, Vice-Minister for Foreign Relations of Paraguay, who represented Ms. Leila Rachid, Foreign Minister of Paraguay in her capacity as Coordinator of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries on trade and development issues. We also thank Mr. Kassymzhomart Tokaev, Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, and Mr. Kazhmurat Nagmanov, Minister for Transport and Communication, for their statements representing the host Government.

9. We commend the continued efforts made by the Government of Kazakhstan in promoting the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and we express our sincere thanks to the Government and people of the Republic of Kazakhstan for their generous hospitality and support for the successful holding of this High-level Meeting.